

UPHAM'S CORNER HEALTH CENTER  
UPHAM'S CORNER HEALTH COMMITTEE, INC.  
500 COLUMBIA ROAD  
DORCHESTER, MASS. 02125  
(617) 287-8000

July 16, 2014

Attorney General Martha Coakley  
Attn: Antitrust Division  
Office of Attorney General  
One Ashburton Place, 18th Floor  
Boston, MA 02108

RE: Settlement with Partners HealthCare

Dear Attorney General Coakley:

I am writing to register my support for the settlement that has been reached between your office and Partners HealthCare. I see the agreement between the AG and Partners as a fair and responsible solution to a difficult legal and public policy problem. I think it is important for the agreement as drafted to become final so that all of the parties can move forward.

I offer these comments in the context of more than 15 years of experience with Partners as an organization collaborating with the Upham's Corner Health Center, in North Dorchester. It is clear that Partners is deeply committed to supporting high quality, cost-effective care in diverse neighborhoods and communities where people live and work. Partners and its hospitals operate or collaborate with 20 health centers in Boston and on the North Shore. These collaborations involve real partnerships to strengthen health centers and improve the health of some of the neediest citizens in the Commonwealth. Partners invests in capital improvements so health centers have the physical capacity to provide care to patients; operating support so health centers can live out their mission of providing high quality, excellent care to all regardless of ability to pay; as well as funding of special programs to ensure the patients with the highest needs get the specialized care they need. In addition to providing direct support to individual health centers, Partners has been a leader in addressing the primary care provider shortage by supporting the operations of a state-wide loan repayment and retention program and by launching the Kraft Center for Community Health whose aim is to develop the next generation of leaders in community health.

It is also important to note that Partners keeps the commitments it makes. They have been an entirely trustworthy partner. Here are some examples:

At our request, Partners provided Upham's Corner with a Partners-based electronic health record (EHR) and information technology (IT) network and platform in 1998. When it became clear that the EHR and network were no longer meeting the needs of the health

center and of Partners, Partners provided significant funding and technical support to assist Upham's Corner to move onto a new electronic health record and our own IT network. This was an expensive and complicated project and Partners stayed with it until it was clear that Upham's Corner had a system that would not only work, but work better than what we had before.

Fifteen years ago, Partners committed to provide annual support for key health center staff that work to improve public health and the health of individual patients but are not reimbursable through insurance. Specifically, Partners provides funding for a nurse focused on helping patients manage their asthma and diabetes; teen health specialists that assist teens with family planning decisions and other clinical and emotional issues; and community health advocates who help patients deal with the non-clinical issues that affect their health, such as housing, employment, and violence. Partners has maintained that commitment for all of these years and our patients are healthier because of that commitment.

We look forward to many more years of this strong partnership with Partners.

I understand that the settlement is a complex public policy issue and that there are many parties that have different views of it because of how it will impact their own organizations. However, I know that it is your job, Attorney General, to protect the public interest – not the interest of individual organizations – and the fact that this is where you landed after many years of work gives me every confidence that it is a settlement that will ultimately serve the residents of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward F. Grimes', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward F. Grimes  
Executive Director  
Upham's Corner Health Center